

Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 FDRE-00 IO-13 EB-07 IGA-02 NSC-05

NSCE-00 DHA-02 INR-07 INRE-00 ORM-02 DODE-00 OMB-01

TRSE-00 H-02 SSO-00 CIAE-00 PRS-01 SCA-01 SCS-03

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O 231434Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 134

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ---

SUBJECT: NSC REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON ITALY EARTHQUAKE
RELIEF/REHABILITATION EFFORT

AIDAC PASS OWENS FROM COSTANTINO

REF: STATE 234335

1. THE EMBASSY CONFIRMS THAT ONLY REQUESTS RECEIVED TO DATE AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE RECENT EARTHQUAKE ARE THOSE LISTED IN PARA 1.A. OF REFTTEL. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE GOI REQUIRES FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE BUT IT IS POSSIBLE THAT FURTHER REQUESTS FOR SPECIALIZED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MAY BE FORTHCOMING.

2. EMBASSY AGREES THAT REEVALUATION OF THE AGREED LONG TERM REHABILITATION PROGRAM IS NOT INDICATED. ANTICIPATE GRANT AGREEMENTS OBLIGATING MOST AVAILABLE FUNDS WILL BE CONCLUDED BY SEPT. 30. HOWEVER, FOR TACTICAL NEGOTIATING REASONS CONTINUE BELIEVE SUCH OBLIGATION SHOULD FOLLOW NOT PRECEDE COMPLETE COMPLIANCE BY FRIULI AUTHORITIES ALL CONDITIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED SUCH AS DEDICATION SITES, BUILDING PERMITS AND
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THE LIKE. ONCE AGREEMENTS CONCLUDED AND BUILDING SITES CLEARED,

DESIGN PHASE WILL BEGIN IN CONSULTATION LOCAL AUTHORITIES. ASSUMING ALL GOES SMOOTHLY MY OPTIMISTIC ASSESSMENT WOULD BE THAT CONSTRUCTION WOULD BEGIN WHEN WEATHER CONDITIONS PERMIT IN SPRING. HOWEVER, BEAR IN MIND THAT COMPETITIVE DEMANDS FOR AVAILABLE CONSTRUCTION LABOR AND SHORTAGE HOUSING FOR THEM MAY DELAY IMPLEMENTATION. THOSE FACTORS WHICH LED TO THE DECISION TO EXCLUDE PRIVATE DWELLINGS FROM THE AID PROGRAM REMAIN VALID. EVEN IF AID FUNDS WERE SIGNIFICANTLY AUGMENTED, THEY WOULD STILL CONSTITUTE A MARGINAL CONTRIBUTION IN TERMS OF THE REQUIREMENTS AND THE TYPE OF CONSTRUCTION FEASIBLE IN FRIULI. THE DISADVANTAGES OF INVOLVEMENT IN PRIVATE HOUSING WERE FULLY OUTLINED IN THE OPTIONS MEMORANDUM REVIEWED BY THE ADMINISTRATOR. IN OUR ESTIMATION INVOLVEMENT IN MOBILE HOMES IS EVEN LESS SUITABLE FOR U.S. FINANCING. (FYI. THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT IS TRANSFERRING LARGE NUMBERS OF THE FRIULI HOMELESS TO COASTAL RESORT AREAS AND MOBILE CAMPERS.-- NOT HOUSING TRAILERS IN THE U.S. SENSE. THESE "ROULOTTES" ARE BEING REQUISITIONED FOR THE USE OF A LIMITED NUMBER OF WORKERS AND FARMERS WHO MUST REMAIN NEAR THEIR WORK SITE OR CARE FOR LIVESTOCK. COST/BENEFIT RATIO OF U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROVISION OF MOBILE HOMES IS CLEARLY NEGATIVE. MOREOVER, U.S. ASSISTANCE OF THIS KIND HAS NOT BEEN REQUESTED BY THE GOI.

3. WE STRONGLY URGE THAT YOU INFORM THE NSC (A) THAT THE GOI IS CAPABLE OF HANDLING FORESEEABLE EMERGENCY REQUIREMENTS AND THAT SPECIALIZED TECHNOLOGICAL NEEDS MAY BE THE ONLY JUSTIFIABLE EXCEPTION -- E.G. USGS CONSULTANTS; (B) U.S. INTERESTS ARE BEING SERVED BY MAINTAINING THE COMMITMENTS ALREADY MADE FOR SCHOOLS AND HOMES FOR THE AGED AND THAT WITHDRAWAL FROM THESE COMMITMENTS WOULD CONSTITUTE A SERIOUS BREACH OF FAITH WITH THE AUTHORITIES IN FRIULI WHO EXPECT TO PROCEED NOW WITH FORMAL AGREEMENTS. IN FACT THE FUNDS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE FOR SCHOOLS AND HOMES FOR THE AGED ARE INADEQUATE IN LIGHT OF THE INCREASED NEEDS OF PORDENONE PROVINCE FOR SIMILAR ASSISTANCE AND INCREASED FINANCIAL PRESSURE ON THE ENTIRE REGION CAUSED BY THE RECENT ADDED DAMAGE.

4. WE BELIEVE YOU SHOULD SUGGEST TO THE NSC THAT IF UNANTICIPATED EMERGENCY NEEDS ARISE (THEY WOULD PROBABLY BE LIMITED) THESE COULD BE HANDLED WITH DISASTER ASSISTANCE FUNDS. IN THIS REGARD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE \$25,000 NOW SET ASIDE FOR THIS PURPOSE MAY NOT PROVE SUFFICIENT TO ALLOW THE NECESSARY LATITUDE IN THE EVENT THAT COMMISSIONER ZAMBERLETTI DOES IN FACT REQUEST OUR JUSTIFIABLE HELP.

5. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE PRESIDENT AND THE CONGRESS HAVE UNDER CONSIDERATION ADDITIONAL FUNDING. IF THE AID RELIEF EFFORT IN THE FRIULI IS IN FACT ENLARGED WE BELIEVE IT SHOULD REMAIN

DEDICATED TO PERMANENT VISIBLE, HUMANITARIAN PROJECTS WITH WHICH THE U.S. WILL REMAIN IDENTIFIED. PRIME MINISTER IN CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR INDICATED HE AGREED WE SHOULD CONTINUE OUR PRESENT COURSE OF ACTION AND NOT CONSIDER ALTERING OUR PROGRAM WHICH HELPS IDENTIFY U.S. WITH VISIBLE PROJECTS NEEDED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE FRIULI.

6. EMBASSY AND AMCON TRIESTE HAVE ALREADY REPORTED GOI MEASURES TO COPE WITH EMERGENCY AND TO RAISE FUNDS TO COVER URGENT REQUIREMENTS. LATEST REPORT ROME 15361. WILL REPORT PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS BY PHONE FOLLOWING TOUR EARTHQUAKE AREA. HOWEVER, SUGGEST YOU MAY WISH REQUEST SETAF CARRY OUT GROUND SURVEY SINCE MY REPORT OF NECESSITY WILL BE BASED ON IMPRESSIONS GAINED IN CURSORY MANNER SINCE I WILL BE TIED UP WITH GRANT PROCESS MOST OF MY STAY IN FRIULI. VOLPE

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